# ISCRAM GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS

## (condensed version)

ISCRAM Board Policy Document

**Document history:**

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Related Documents:

1 ISCRAM Reviewing Guide (version approved by ISCRAM Board, 2013.11.21)

## 1. Objective of this document

The objective of this document is to summarize the reviewing procedures which ISCRAM reviewers should follow for all ISCRAM events. It includes definitions of the types of ISCRAM papers, reviewing criteria, and the ethics and etiquette of the reviewing process. This is a condensed version of the full ISCRAM Reviewing Guide (available on the ISCRAM website, Publications tab), which expands these points and recommends a reviewing procedure for less-experienced reviewers.

## 2. Types of ISCRAM Paper

ISCRAM defines two types of paper: *Research* and *Insight*. *Research* papers are intended to meet the needs of researchers by being peer reviewed to the highest academic standards. The primary aim of an academic paper is to make a contribution to the scientific body of knowledge. By contrast, *insight* papers are intended to meet the needs of practitioners, managers, professionals, experts, and policy makers by being peer reviewed to practical standards. The primary aim is to give an insight into what real-world problems arise during emergencies, disasters, and crises, and how such problems can be solved with the help of information systems. They cover operational, emergency management, policy making, and similar matters.

Both types of papers may be submitted in *Full* or *Short* form. A *full* paper reports on a completed project or piece of work, including validation of the results. Validation may take a variety of forms, ranging from analytical validation (i.e. using formal or mathematical techniques) to operational evaluation by users. A full paper has a maximum length of ten pages, including figures and references. Because they describe completed work, only full papers may be candidates for selection for the Best Paper, Best Student Paper, and Best Insight Paper awards. By contrast, a *short* paper is intended for the reporting of part of a complete project or piece of work. For example, a short paper may describe a project or research plan, a literature survey, the design of an information system, the development and testing of software, user evaluation of developed software, deployment, a real incident, a proposed new policy, and the like. A short paper has a maximum length of five pages.

This table summarizes the four types of papers that may be submitted to ISCRAM:

| | Research - Full | Research - Short | Insight - Full | Insight - Short |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Content** | Completed work | Work in progress (e.g. project or research plan, literature survey, IS development, evaluation) | Completed work (e.g. historical overviews, case studies, reflection, discussion) | Proposing an idea (e.g. raising issues, discussion points, research gaps, lessons learned) |
| **Type of author** | Any, although primarily intended for researchers. | | Any, although primarily intended for practitioners, managers, professionals, experts, and policy makers. | |
| **Type of reviewer** | Academic | | Academic & Practitioner | |
| **Max length (pages)** | 10 | 5 | 10 | 5 |
| **Abstract?** | Yes | | | Desirable |
| **References?** | Yes | | Not essential | |
| **Standards** | Highest academic | | Practical; ideas explained & well grounded | |
| **Criteria** | Relevance, significance, originality, validity, and clarity | | | |
| **Blinding** | Double-blind (i.e. neither author nor reviewer knows who the other is) | | | |

# 3. Reviewing criteria

The same five criteria are used to judge all types of ISCRAM papers, whether the paper is Research or Insight, Full or Short. However, some of these criteria are defined differently between Research and Insight papers, as shown in the table below. To select a score for each criterion, the reviewer should use the following 5-point scale: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral, neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree.

| Criterion | Research paper | Insight paper |
|---|---|---|
| Relevance | Relates *both* to information systems *and* the management of crises, emergencies or disasters. Relevance to the track or topic for which it is submitted. Relevance to special theme (if any) is nice to have. | |
| Significance | Presents knowledge about a way of designing, developing or deploying ISCRAM, about a way of managing crises, emergencies or disasters using information systems, or about the individual, organizational, or social consequences of ISCRAM that could open up or close off a line of academic research (for *Research* papers) or that improve the understanding or design of ISCRAM or ways of using ISCRAM by practitioners (for *Insight* papers). | |
| Originality | Ideas that are new to researchers, timely, non-trivial, and well-grounded in the existing academic body of knowledge. | Ideas that are new, timely, and non-trivial to those who design, implement, or use ISCRAM. |
| Validity | Research is based on appropriate theory, methods and approaches. References are suitable and relevant to content. Conclusions are reached by complete and logically correct argumentation. | Content is grounded in the actual experiences and realities of practitioners, professionals, experts, and/or policy makers. |
| Clarity | Paper is well structured, language is easy to read, figures and diagrams are easy to see, and any jargon and abbreviations used will be understandable by the audience at the ISCRAM event. | |

# 4. Ethics and etiquette

Peer review plays an important role in ensuring the integrity of the scientific body of knowledge, of which ISCRAM proceedings are a part. The review process depends largely on trust, requiring all those involved to behave responsibly and ethically. ISCRAM reviewers should:

- Only agree to review submissions for which they have the subject expertise required to carry out a proper assessment and which they can assess in a timely manner.
- Respect the confidentiality of peer review and not reveal details of a submission during or after the peer-review process, or to use information obtained during the peer-review process for their own or any other person's or organization's advantage.
- Declare all potential conflicting interests, seeking advice from the ISCRAM conference organizers if they are unsure whether something constitutes a relevant interest.

- Not allow reviews to be influenced by the origins of a submission, by the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender or other characteristics of the authors, or by commercial considerations.
- Be objective and constructive in their reviews, refraining from being hostile or inflammatory and from making libellous or derogatory personal comments.

By following these guidelines, ISCRAM reviewers ensure that the review process is rigorous, fair, and consistent from track to track. Any further questions about the process should be reviewed to track chairs or the program committee.